

Programme Specification

MA Communication Design (full-time)	PFTZCDESIGHM
MA Communication Design (Book Design) (full-time)	PFTZCDBOOKHM (internal transfer only)
MA Communication Design (Book Design) (part-time)	PPTZCDBOOKHM (internal transfer only)
MA Communication Design (Graphic Design) (full-time)	PFTZCDGRAPHM (internal transfer only)
MA Communication Design (Graphic Design) (part-time)	PPTZCDGRAPHM (internal transfer only)
MA Communication Design (Information Design) (full-time)	PFTZCDINFOHM (internal transfer only)
MA Communication Design (Information Design) (part-time)	PPTZCDINFOHM (internal transfer only)
MA Communication Design (Typeface Design) (full-time)	PFTZCDTYPEHM (internal transfer only)
MA Communication Design (Typeface Design) (part-time)	PPTZCDTYPEHM (internal transfer only)
MA Communication Design (part-time)	PPTZCDESIGHM

For students entering in 2027/28

This document sets out key information about your Programme and forms part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

Awarding Institution	University of Reading
Teaching Institution	University of Reading
Length of Programme	MA Communication Design (full-time) - 12 months MA Communication Design (Book Design) (full-time) - 12 months (internal transfer only) MA Communication Design (Book Design) (part-time) - 24 months (internal transfer only) MA Communication Design (Graphic Design) (full-time) - 12 months (internal transfer only) MA Communication Design (Graphic Design) (part-time) - 24 months (internal transfer only) MA Communication Design (Information Design) (full-time) - 12 months (internal transfer only) MA Communication Design (Information Design) (part-time) - 24 months (internal transfer only) MA Communication Design (Typeface Design) (full-time) - 12 months (internal transfer only) MA Communication Design (Typeface Design) (part-time) - 24 months (internal transfer only) MA Communication Design (part-time) - 24 months
Accreditation	N/A
Programme Start Dates	September

QAA Subject Benchmarking Group	N/A
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Programme information and content

The aim of this programme is to provide a thorough grounding in principles and methods of Communication Design, combining practical learning with the study of historical and theoretical issues. It aims to develop fluent, articulate, and reflective designers who are well-equipped to influence the direction of their subject and profession through their effective problem-solving abilities, through originality in their application of knowledge, and through their exercise of sound professional judgement. The programme aims to equip graduates with an understanding of how design principles and discourses interact with current practice, including an engagement with the constraints and potentials of current technology. The programme supports students in the development of skills relevant to current practice in different areas in Communication Design, as well as skills for lifelong learning.

Programme Learning Outcomes

-MA Communication Design (full-time)

During the course of the Programme, you will have the opportunity to develop a range of skills, knowledge and attributes (known as learning outcomes) For this programme, these are:

	Learning outcomes
1	Analyse, evaluate, and respond to the problem/s posed by a practical brief, showing independent initiative and a willingness to try alternative approaches.
2	Demonstrate practical working methods appropriate to a specified task and set of resources, including both individual and team working, presentations of design proposals and effective project management.
3	Show evidence, in practical work, of a sensitivity to the needs of users and readers, with an ability to utilise genre attributes and understand evaluation methods.
4	Demonstrate craft skills and technical competence in practical work and an understanding of technical issues for production.
5	Present practical work so that it communicates clearly and effectively, supported by documentary evidence of the development of reflective design thinking.
6	Draw on broad historical, theoretical and technical perspectives in specified areas of Communication Design.
7	Identify and explain the main currents of thought in specified areas in Communication Design, engaging critically with current discourse, policy, research and practice.
8	Locate, critically review and evaluate published literature associated with a specified research topic. Write clearly and use illustrations effectively to explain and reinforce an argument in written work.

You will be expected to engage in learning activities to achieve these Programme learning outcomes. Assessment of your modules will reflect these learning outcomes and test how far you have met the requirements for your degree.

To pass the Programme, you will be required to meet the progression or accreditation and award criteria set out below.

Module information

The programme comprises 180 credits, allocated across a range of compulsory and optional modules as shown below. Compulsory modules are listed.

Compulsory modules

Module	Name	Credits	Level
TGMCDC	Core	20	M
TGMCDDC	Dissertation	60	M
TGMCDP	Reflective Practice	100	M

All modules on this programme are compulsory. Where required during the programme, students select their specialist dissertation pathway route and are internally transferred from the compulsory entry dissertation module (listed on the table above) to their 'pathway-specific' dissertation module. The selection of the pathway-specific dissertation module determines the pathway a student will be graduating in. Entry to the pathway-specific dissertation module will be at the discretion of the university and subject to availability.

PATHWAYS

Book Design:

Pathway-specific dissertation module (internal transfer only) TGMCDDB

Graphic Design:

Pathway-specific dissertation module (internal transfer only) TGMCDDG

Information Design:

Pathway-specific dissertation module (internal transfer only) TGMCDDI

Typeface Design:

Pathway-specific dissertation module (internal transfer only) TGMCDDT

Students on the Typeface Design pathway will take the compulsory module TGMCDPT: Reflective Practice (Typeface Design) 100 credits in place of TGMCDP: Reflective Practice 100 credits.

Part-time or flexible modular arrangements

The programme can be taken part-time over two years.

In the first year of study, a student will undertake the compulsory module TGMCDC Core.

Elements of the compulsory module TGMCDP Reflective Practice or TGMCDPT: Reflective Practice (Typeface Design) are undertaken incrementally across both years, with the module being completed during the second year of study.

Preparatory teaching sessions for the compulsory module TGMCDDC Dissertation are taken in the first year of study. In the second year of study, a student will be required to transfer to their pathway-specific dissertation module (TGMCDDB, TGMCDDG, TGMCDDI or TGMCDDT) with the module being completed during the second year of study.

The programme may not be completed over more than two years.

Placement opportunities

There may be opportunities for self-directed professional practice assignments with industry partners on certain pathways within the module TGMCDP Reflective Practice or TGMCDPT: Reflective Practice (Typeface Design).

Study abroad opportunities

N/A

Optional modules

There are no optional modules on this programme. However, where required during the programme, students select their specialist dissertation pathway route and are transferred from the compulsory entry dissertation module to their 'pathway-specific' dissertation module. The selection of the pathway-specific dissertation module determines the pathway a student will be graduating in. Entry to the pathway specific dissertation module will be at the discretion of the university and subject to availability.

Teaching and learning delivery

Teaching will be by means of lectures, seminars, written assignments, studio sessions, demonstrations and critiques. When appropriate, elements of the programme will be delivered via digital technology.

Weekly seminars and lectures consider key concepts in Communication Design, drawing on a range of research and practice. Seminars may focus on specific areas of discourse and debate, key texts, original artefacts, or topics relating to the specialist pathways offered within the programme. Seminars also make use of visual aids, which may be digital resources or artefacts. For seminars and written assignments, students are encouraged to explore both digital and artefactual resources, and are provided with support for locating information online and making use of the Department's Collections & Archives.

Practical tasks cover both core areas in Communication Design, and areas aligned to the specialist pathways available for the cohort. Teaching takes place in a series of weekly studio sessions, demonstrations, and critiques, which run throughout both semesters. The number and duration of practical tasks is determined by the Programme Director and Specialist Pathway Leads. Students may select and self-direct specific elements according to their interests, in consultation with teaching staff.

In addition to regular members of staff, visiting lecturers and demonstrators contribute sessions or workshops on specific topics. These enrich the subjects covered and provide important feedback from the Communication Design Industry.

Many of the practical teaching sessions are informal, and facilitate group discussion of work. Through these, students are encouraged to be reflective about their own practice, and to discuss their work-in-progress. Practical sessions are convened in small groups, and involve group and individual meetings and tutorials. Students will be allowed the opportunity to engage in self-directed practical tasks, or practical tasks with industry partners after consultation and approval by teaching staff. At the end of a practical exercise a review may include plenary meetings, and also sub-group meetings and individual tutorials. These reviews may also require a concluding presentation to both students and supervising staff.

In addition to scheduled contact hours, students will be expected to undertake guided independent study. Information about module study hours including contact hours and the amount of independent study which a student is normally expected to undertake for a module is indicated in the relevant module description.

The scheduled teaching and learning activity hours and amount of technology enhanced learning activity for this programme will depend upon the precise combination of elements within the large Reflective Practice Module. On average, the total overall study time will be 1800 hours with 360 contact hours. In addition, students will undertake some self-scheduled teaching and learning activities, designed by and/or involving staff, which incorporate some flexibility into their required time for completion. Students will also be expected to undertake guided independent study. Information about module study hours including contact hours and the amount of independent study which a student is normally expected to undertake for a module is indicated in the relevant module description.

Accreditation details
N/A

Assessment
The programme will be assessed through a combination of practical coursework outputs including reflective documentations; and written coursework outputs, including a dissertation. Further information is contained in the individual module descriptions.

Progression
N/A

Classification
The University's taught postgraduate marks classification is as follows:
Mark Interpretation

70 - 100% Distinction
60 - 69% Merit
50 - 59% Good standard (Pass)

Failing categories:

40 - 49% Work below threshold standard
0 - 39% Unsatisfactory Work

For Master's Degree

The following conditions must be satisfied for the award of a Master's degree:

Award of a Master's degree

- (i) an overall weighted average of 50% or more over 180 credits
- (ii) a mark of 50% or more in at least 120 credits
- (iii) no credits with a mark below 40%
- (iv) a mark of 50% or more for the Dissertation

In addition to the threshold conditions for the award of a Master's degree, the following **further** conditions must be satisfied for a classification of Distinction or Merit:

Distinction

An overall weighted average of 70% or more over 180 credits

OR

an overall weighted average of 68% or more over 180 credits and marks of 70% in at least 90 credits

AND

Where the dissertation is included in the conditions for the award of a Master's degree, a mark of at least 60% in the dissertation

AND

No marks below 40%.

Merit

An overall weighted average of 60% or more over 180 credits

OR

an overall average of 58% or more over 180 credits and marks of 60% in at least 90 credits

AND

No marks below 40%.

For Postgraduate Diploma

The following conditions must be satisfied for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma:

Award of a Postgraduate Diploma

- (i) an overall weighted average of 50% or more over 120 credits
- (ii) a mark of 50% or more in at least 80 credits
- (iii) no credits with a mark below 40%

In addition to the threshold conditions for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma, the following further conditions must be satisfied for a classification of Distinction or Merit:

Distinction

An overall weighted average of 70% or more over 120 credits

OR

an overall weighted average of 68% or more over 120 credits and marks of 70% in at least 60 credits

AND

No marks below 40%.

Merit

An overall weighted average of 60% or more over 120 credits

OR

an overall average of 58% or more over 120 credits and marks of 60% in at least 60 credits

AND

No marks below 40%.

For Postgraduate Certificate

The following conditions must be satisfied for the award of a Postgraduate Certificate:

Award of a Postgraduate Certificate

- (i) an overall weighted average of 50% or more over 60 credits
- (ii) No credits with a mark below 40%.

Details of the classification method is given in detail in the [Assessment Handbook](#) under:

- Section 19: Awards: Postgraduate Master's, Postgraduate Diploma, Postgraduate Certificate

Please note that there may be a specific version for your year of entry.

Additional costs of the programme

Students are expected to have their own laptops with the relevant software licenses for the practical tasks they are working on. Printing facilities are available in the Department, and printout and mounting expenses will be incurred, depending on the individual tasks that students undertake and the variety of working materials required for these tasks (e.g. for creating models, mock-ups, etc.).

A series of optional field trips may be offered, which might imply travel, accommodation, and subsistence costs. Field trips typically range from evening or day trips to London and

Oxford for specific events like lectures and library visits, or trips to relevant conferences in the UK and abroad.

Costs are indicative and may vary according to optional modules chosen and are subject to inflation and other price fluctuations. Estimates were calculated in 2026.

Students may consider purchasing a laptop to help support their learning. Information on recommended device specifications can be found on the [DTS Student Hub](#).

For further information about your Programme please refer to the Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions, which are available at <http://www.reading.ac.uk/module/>. The Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions do not form part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

MA Communication Design (full-time) for students entering in session 2027/28

23 July 2026

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